

## Seeing an Opportunity in Change

MICHELE & JEFF KOHL

Spa & Club Ideations LLC • Las Vegas, Nevada

Spa & Club Ideations, LLC was founded in 2001 by husband-and-wife team Jeff and Michele Kohl out of a passion to deliver wellness solutions across the corporate and private sectors. Building a successful business requires the ability to see when an industry is changing and understanding how to take advantage of that change. They recall a mentor asking them if they were willing to go out and play in traffic—they both replied with a resounding yes—so they formed their company.

### Early Roots

Jeff and Michele's passion for the industry goes back to the early 1980's when they were founders of Firm Fitness, Inc., a business that brought fitness and wellness services into private homes and businesses. It was not just a personal fitness training business—Michele hired massage therapists and athletic trainers, bringing spa-style fitness and wellness to many private clients, plus a handful of high-profile businesses, including Walt Disney World Resorts, Isleworth Country Club and NFL Quarterback Challenge. Firm Fitness, Inc. was among the first to bring this now widely available concept to the market.

From those early days of providing fitness and wellness-specific services, the company has evolved to deliver cutting-edge solutions to spa clients across a broad range of services. From marketing and strategy planning, staffing wage analysis and new facility construction to spa menu and product line development, the company delivers solutions with a "customer first" mentality.

### Building Connections with Clients

One of the many defining moments for the business is the couple's close association with Walt Disney World in Florida over the last two decades. In fact, Jeff was invited to become a founding "cast member" of the Disney Institute, the entertainment giant's first foray into the world of spa and wellness. Its success led Jeff to play a significant role in the first Disney cruise ships—where the team truly developed the values that still drive their company today.

The Kohl's relationship with Mayo Clinic, which started in 2013, has solidified their reputation as a serious, dedicated and



results-driven development partner. Over the past two years, the team has had the pleasure of opening the first-of-its-kind spa facility with Mayo Clinic. As part of Mayo Clinic's Healthy Living Program, it marks the first time a top U.S. health-care provider entered into the spa business.

The relationship with Mayo Clinic has also led Michele to publish a white paper. Entitled "Spa Cleanliness – Multiple Steps," it is based on her 10-month experience of opening Mayo Clinic's spa.

### Keys to Success

As business partners, the couple learned the importance of playing up each other's strengths. Jeff is the big-thinker and progressive project-mover, while Michele is more focused on the detail and project programming and processes.

Together, their greatest strength is having a business model that they firmly believe in and a passion for the development of the industry. Both have frequently mentored young business owners. Michele, in particular, finds gratification in looking into the future of their clients' businesses, both large and small. The couple finds it most rewarding to bring new projects and products to their partners, to connect with businesses and individuals, and proactively connect these same businesses and individuals to others. ■

NOTE: One of ISPA's most active veteran members, Jeff is a former three-term chairman and treasurer of ISPA and a multiple-term chairman of the ISPA Foundation.